

E

474
97
T27





Class E 474

Book 114

In Memoriam.

AMONG the victims of Quantrell's late raid upon Lawrence, was JOSIAH C. TRASK, Editor of the *Kansas State Journal*. Being identified with the cause of Republican Liberty, he was among the first to fall beneath the merciless hands of assassins in that cowardly and bloody attack.

The inhabitants were taken by surprise. At early day-break, awakened by the yells of these infuriated demons he sprang from his bed, and, despite the earnest protestations of his young wife, went to the door, and demanded their business. Loading the air with oaths and yells, they cried, "Your money!—your money!" He threw his wallet to them, when, with still more horrible oaths, accompanied by threats of firing into the house if not obeyed, they commanded him, with three other gentlemen, to "come out." As no possible resistance could be made, and the lives of women and children were at stake, the order was obeyed. "Come on," said young Trask to his comrades; and, advancing a few yards, they were commanded to halt and form in line. Then the cowardly butchery began. Firing their revolvers, and riding round and round their victims, with the first discharge they pierced the heart of this noble young patriot.

Many and bitter are the tears which have been shed over the mangled remains of one so fair and so brave. But his mission in behalf of liberty has been accomplished, and his memory cannot perish.

His remains were brought to Fitchburg—his New England home—and now rest on one of its breezy hill-tops—a suitable lodgment for one whose soul was as free as the mountain air.

His funeral was attended by a large concourse of citizens, and Rev. E. Davis—once his pastor—made, in substance, the following remarks, as a tribute to his memory.

I HAVE seen, in a gallery of art, a painting, by a master, of the SACRED HEAD, in which the pencil has thrown such depth and refinement of anguish, that I stood dumb before it for a moment, and then hurried away. And yet, such a strange attraction had that painting, that I have gone again

and again, only to gaze, and then, awed into dumbness as before, hurry on, with my heart breaking in the smothered cry —

“O, Sacred Head, once wounded,
With grief and pain weighed down!”

With the same anguish I have looked, in imagination, upon the bloody picture now hung up before the nation in the green spot where but yesterday Lawrence, that beautiful young city of the West, stood. The pleasant homes I have there visited, smouldering sepulchres of those who perished by fire; the friendly hands I have grasped, rigidly folded in a violent death; the light of eyes that beamed with affection, quenched forever! Going again and again to that picture, blinded with tears, I am compelled to hurry away! My friends, gathered here to-day, you have had, I presume, the same experience.

Nor can I dwell upon THE SORROW which, in connection with the ruin that swept over Lawrence, has called us to this place of prayer. These stricken mourners would not have me do so. Tendering to you all — Wife. Parents, Brothers, Sisters — on behalf of my clerical brethren and this whole community, my cordial sympathy, I turn, for the moment allotted to me, from this dark picture, to the light of that young life that lies, in my memory, behind it.

Fourteen years ago I first knew JOSIAH C. TRASK. He was a frank, glad, impetuous youth — the elements of a great life within him, and vital force enough to make that life, should these elements be perverted, a memorable wreck, or, if consecrated, lift it into preëminent usefulness and imperishable honor. For years I watched with unwonted interest the development of that life. But with native nobleness of mind, he had also upon him the constant pressure of that wide, warm, earnest, liberty-loving, pilgrim faith, which, thank God, has never wholly died out from the homes and churches of New England. Before he left Fitchburg, many a friend beside myself rejoiced to see these elements worthily rounding into form — a form of character which after-years were making compact and beautiful.

Look at a few traits, which will be at once recognized by those who knew him.

INDUSTRY. — Who ever knew him otherwise than busy? He was preëminently so; and, as the years went on, at

he entered more fully into the battle of life, he seemed to act on Cecil's motto, "Do something—*do it*—DO IT."

SELF-RELIANCE.—When, at the age of sixteen, he left home, to find employment in his chosen profession, his father said to him, "Shall I not give you letters of introduction and recommendation to gentlemen in the city, my son?" his reply was characteristically full of this manly trait: "I think not, sir; I can introduce myself, and intend to be my own recommendation."

NOBLENES OF AIM.—Not only to do something, but to do it well. To succeed in business, and in his plan for life, had to him the earnest of a blessing for others—his father's house, and wider circles of humanity—as well as for himself. To control others by a hand that should mould their activities for beneficent ends, was a purpose that found a fitting accomplishment, soon after he left home, in his foremanship of the working force of printers in a large New York establishment.

STRAIGHTFORWARDNESS.—Governor Robinson, with other State officers, had been indicted, on charges of a gross nature, by the Senate of Kansas, and he asked young Trask to go to the seat of government, and publish a small daily sheet, in his defence, during the trial. The boy-editor loved the governor, but he would not defend him if guilty; and so he asked him, in his *straight* way, "Governor, *is it all right?*"—"Trask," was the equally straight reply, "you can trust me; *it is all right.*" Each knew, as great souls always do, his man. The case was defended in a keen little sheet, and the young editor had the satisfaction of seeing the executive of Kansas *unanimously* acquitted by the same body that had corruptly indicted him.

TEMPERANCE.—In connection with the printing of the public records of Nebraska, he was making a trip to that territory, when, at the dinner-table one day, the captain said to him, "Mr. Trask, join me in a glass of wine."—"Thank you, captain," was the prompt reply; "I drink no wine, but will join you in a glass of water." The next day, a judge, an officer of the government, said to him, "You are a man, but I am a fool. I did not drink wine at the table yesterday, but, not having the manliness to take stand, I *pretended* to do so." Young men, ponder these its, and copy them!

REGARD FOR FREEDOM.—It was this that led him to

Kansas seven years ago. It was this that kept him there — that he might help *permanently* to secure in that young and thriving State the inheritance whose purchase had cost so much blood and treasure. He was asked, some time previous to his fall, "What will you do if the guerillas invade your State?" His reply was brave and characteristic: "I'll die for Kansas!" *

UNSELFISHNESS.—"Was my son a Christian?" asked his father of the business man in Kansas, who of all others knew him best. "No, sir, not by profession," was the reply; "but he was unselfish. He loved God, and he loved his fellow-men." In short, he seems to me to have heard King David's charge to his kingly son, "Show thyself a man!" and to have consecrated the energies of his nature to fulfil it.

And must this life, so earnest and so full of promise, go out in darkness? No—it cannot be. He has neither lived nor died in vain. I recognize in this young man—strong, beautiful, intelligent, unselfish—and the fiend, who, nigh his own threshold, in the gray of that terrible morning, drew the murderous rifle upon him, the fitting representatives of the two civilizations, the Pilgrim Rock and the Slave Oligarchy, now in deadly conflict on this continent. As the accursed assassin smote down this young man, so the relentless slave power is striving to trample down into utter ruin all that is precious in

"The land which our fathers loved—
The freedom which they died to win."

Let this bloody deed be a warning to the land, and, with its kindred atrocities, impress the people with this fact, that, if the nation shall live, slavery must die!

* "O, fateful prophecy! O, fresh young lips,
That uttered it half smiling! Did no drear
Forecast of evil, like a dark eclipse,
Blanch their bright bloom the while, as with a mortal fear?

'I'll die for Kansas!' Ay, and he *has* died!
Died in the freshness of his young renown.
O, reverently, my country, yet with pride,
Give him his well-earned due, a martyr's name and crown!

And 'bleeding Kansas,' as she counts her slain,
And Freedom, numbering up her martyred dead,
Shall make brave mention of his sacred name,
And weeping say, 'For us, for us his blood was shed.'



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 013 706 809 6